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Topics:

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- Foreign and Defense Policy of Ukraine
- The course of the Russian-Ukrainian war

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■ *THEME ANALYSIS: G-7 is transforming into G-8 through the efforts of Ukraine*



Photo: Office of the President of Ukraine

On May 19-21, the G7 summit was held in the city of Hiroshima, Japan. The President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyy was invited to participate in this event. A number of other heads of state from various regions were also invited to Hiroshima. In particular, India, South Korea, Indonesia, Brazil, Australia, Vietnam and the Comoros Islands, the country that currently chairs the African Union and the Cook Islands, which chair the Pacific Islands Forum. The topic of Russian aggression became one of the most popular at the summit, while the leaders of other countries were invited to solve a number of global problems. Volodymyr Zelenskyy used the summit to strengthen international support for Ukraine against the backdrop of ongoing Russian aggression.

The President held separate meetings with representatives of the Group of Seven countries and the President of the European Council, Charles Michel, as well as with the President of Indonesia, Joko Widodo, the President of the Republic of Korea, Yoon Suk Yeol, and the Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi. It was the first meeting of the President of Ukraine with the Indian leader after the start of the full-scale invasion.

Among the main topics discussed at the summit were: food and economic security, as well as the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and the war in Ukraine. It is symbolic that the issue of nuclear safety was discussed in a city that suffered a nuclear attack during the Second World War. Now, almost 80 years since that event, humanity is again threatened with

nuclear danger due to the irresponsible actions of the Russian Federation around Ukrainian nuclear power plants.

The Group of Seven countries also focused on discussion of supporting the international order based on the rule of law and the inadmissibility of any unilateral attempts to change the status quo through force or the threat of using nuclear weapons, as Russia has done; continued sanctions pressure on the Russian Federation and support for Ukraine; strengthening the G7's work with the countries of the Global South; ensuring energy security in the conditions of Russia's aggression against Ukraine, etc.

Volodymyr Zelenskyy joined the work of the Summit session "Towards a Peaceful, Stable and Prosperous World". The participation in the extended meeting of so many states from different regions indicates an attempt by the countries of the Group of Seven to strengthen ties with non-Western states in the context of an intensifying global confrontation. Russian aggression exacerbated the global confrontation at the civilizational level. Since the beginning of 2023, China has become more actively involved in the struggle for international support, proposed a number of global initiatives, more actively joined the processes in the Middle East, and strengthened its position in Central Asia. The United States of America, in turn, united the countries of the North Atlantic region to support Ukraine. However, in order to effectively confront the Russian aggressor in Ukraine, as well as China - at the global level, the USA and partner countries need the support of states from other regions.

The United States of America also needs a clear vision of ending the Russian-Ukrainian war. Joe Biden's administration has repeatedly expressed its readiness to support Ukraine for as long as it takes. At the same time, in the context of interaction with Ukraine, the White House chose the strategy of "*controlled escalation*". ***Joe Biden has been trying to avoid escalation for more than a year, delaying the provision of the necessary weapons and thereby inhibiting the possible advancement of the Armed Forces of Ukraine on the battlefield.*** The American military-political leadership did not lose hope that the Russian Federation would eventually realize its strategic defeat and refuse from the idea of seizing Ukraine. That is, the White House hoped for the rationality of the Kremlin. However, instead of the expected results, Russia only continues and increases the scale of aggression. **The Kremlin perceives US concessions and half-steps as weakness.** Another destabilizing action by the Kremlin was the decision to place nuclear weapons in Belarus. These actions only actualized the topic of nuclear security at the G7 summit.

Probably, realizing that the Kremlin is not backing down from the goal of capturing Ukraine, Joe Biden dared to give the green light to the training of Ukrainian pilots on F-16 fighter jets. This intention was announced directly at the Group of Seven summit. Already after the summit, the fact that Russia is ready to continue the war and is not ready to give up its goal regarding Ukraine was confirmed by the words of the Deputy Head of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Mikhail Galuzin, that the "conflict" will be resolved if Ukraine refuses to join the EU and recognizes Russian as the state language.¹ The

¹ Суперечить заявам Путіна: у Росії висунули нові "умови" закінчення війни, 27.05.2023, URL: <https://tsn.ua/ato/superechit-zayavam-putina-u-rosiyi-visunuli-novi-umovi-zakinchennya-viyeni-2337628.html>

Russian leadership periodically changes its rhetoric, putting forward new and old demands. **The only thing that remains unchanged is the belief in the ability to defeat Ukraine, and currently the Kremlin is betting on a protracted war, hoping that the fatigue of Ukraine's partners will allow the Russian Federation to consolidate territorial gains and act in relation to Ukraine from a position of strength.**

After the trip of the special representative of the government of the People's Republic of China Li Hui, **the fact of China's support for Russia was confirmed again.** China once again called on Ukraine's partners to stop sending weapons to the battlefield and hold peace talks. **In fact, China proposed to consolidate the occupation of Ukrainian territory by Russia.** Thus, **the interests of global players converged in Ukraine.** On the one hand, Russia, whose victory is in the interests of China, contrary to the declarations of official Beijing regarding respect for the principles of the UN Charter. On the other hand, there is Ukraine, which is supported by the USA and partner countries.

The results of the Russian-Ukrainian war will not only determine the fate of Ukraine, but also the positions of the United States and the People's Republic of China in relation to each other. If Ukraine does not win this war, it will be another foreign policy defeat for the United States of America. European security will not be restored, and with NATO allies under threat from Russia, the Indo-Pacific confrontation will be much more difficult. The states of the Global South, including those that participated in the G7 summit, will be inclined to cooperate with the winner. And in case of a positive result, the US will have more allies. That is why the issue of Ukraine is so important for the USA. Considerable attention was paid to Ukraine in the final communique following the results of the Hiroshima summit, as well as in a separate statement. However, **the US still lacks a clear vision of the victory of Ukraine as the only scenario for the end of the war.** Artificial restrictions play against Ukraine, the USA and partner countries. By leaving Europe vulnerable now, the US and the states supporting Ukraine will be forced to pay in the future. It was obvious in the fall of 2021, and it is obvious now. Now the future peace in Europe will depend on the decisions of the leaders of the democratic world, which currently includes the President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyy. **Ukraine must get everything it needs to defeat Russia and restore security on the continent.**

- *THEME ANALYSIS: Ukrainian diplomacy seeks to gain support in India and the Arab world*



Photo: Office of the President of Ukraine

Ukraine, against the backdrop of a full-scale Russian invasion, still maintains a high level of support from the countries of the Euro-Atlantic space. At the same time, as the last 14 months have shown, the support of the US and the EU may not be enough to deprive Russia of the ability to continue the war. In the current conditions, the support of states trying to maintain neutrality can play a role in the further delegitimization of the Putin regime, its aggression, and strengthen Ukraine's position on the international arena.

Last month was a period of large-scale work of Ukraine in the direction of the Global South. First, Minister of Foreign Affairs Dmytro Kuleba paid a visit to Latin America. He held a number of bilateral meetings and also took part in the summit of the Association of Caribbean States. After the American trip, without slowing down, Dmytro Kuleba started his second African tour in the second half of the month. There, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine has visited 5 countries: Morocco, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Mozambique, Nigeria, as well as the headquarters of the African Union in Addis Ababa.

With his African colleagues, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine discussed a wide range of issues, including economic and humanitarian cooperation, food security, and called on his colleagues to join the implementation of the Ukrainian Peace Formula. An agreement was reached with Mozambique on joining the humanitarian program "Grain From

Ukraine". Ukraine will also open an embassy in this country. In the future, a Ukrainian-Mozambican business forum is planned. In addition to Mozambique, the embassy of Ukraine will be opened in Rwanda. As well as with Mozambique, an agreement was reached with Rwanda to hold a business forum.

Practical decisions were also made at the meeting with the representative of Morocco. As part of the official visit, the Memorandum on cooperation between the Diplomatic Academy of Ukraine (DAU) and the Moroccan Diplomatic Academy under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Morocco was signed. An agreement was also reached with this country on negotiations regarding the simplification of the visa regime.

Dmytro Kuleba discussed the issue of the Russian-Ukrainian war with representatives of each mentioned African country and offered to join the Ukrainian Peace Formula. ***So far, however, no African country has expressed its willingness to join its implementation.*** After the Russian military invasion, African states mostly worked to secure their own interests, the key of which was food security. The only exception was media information about the transfer of tanks to Ukraine from Morocco.

Currently, a group of African states: South Africa, Senegal, Egypt, the Republic of Congo, Uganda and Zambia have made attempts to join the peace process. The specified states agreed to send a mediation mission to Russia and Ukraine and to propose a road map for a peaceful settlement. *Among the points of a possible plan, African leaders have already mentioned the establishment of a ceasefire.* Previously, the Ukrainian leadership has repeatedly stated that a ceasefire without the withdrawal of Russian troops will freeze the conflict, without securing its resolution, and the Peace Formula should be the basis of any peaceful settlement. **The African initiative does not inspire confidence in Ukraine, as it does not take into account the interests of the state against which the attack is conducted.** In addition, the group of countries mostly consists of those who do not support the main resolutions of the UN General Assembly regarding Ukraine. South Africa is a BRICS country and, according to the media, transferred weapons to Russia. Given this experience, the African initiative is likely to play into the aggressor state interests. However, in recent months, Ukrainian diplomacy has repeatedly emphasized its openness to dialogue with the so-called "states-peacebuilders", that is why a delegation of six African countries will visit Kyiv in June.

Dialogue with the countries of the Maghreb and the Middle East remains no less important. Another step in strengthening Ukraine's ties with states that remain neutral was Volodymyr Zelenskyy's address to the member states of **the League of Arab States** at the summit in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The Kingdom is trying to take a position of neutrality in the Russian-Ukrainian war: the state facilitated the exchange of 300 prisoners between the Russian Federation and Ukraine, which included 10 citizens of the United States and Great Britain. Also, the country provided humanitarian support to Ukraine in the amount of 400 million dollars. In the same month, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Saudi Arabia (KSA) Faisal Bin Farhan Al-Saud made the first official visit to Ukraine since the establishment of diplomatic relations between Ukraine and Saudi Arabia. At the same time, KSA refused to increase oil production, which could affect the profits of the Russian

Federation, and maintains friendly relations with the aggressor country. In addition, in the global US-China confrontation, the KSA has strengthened ties with the PRC in recent months. At first, through the mediation of Beijing, Riyadh restored diplomatic ties with Tehran, and after that, Saudi Arabia became a "dialogue partner" of the SCO. Volodymyr Zelenskyy's speech was a step for Ukraine to meet Ukraine with the Arab world. However, in addition to Volodymyr Zelenskyy, Bashar Assad was also invited to the summit. The United States of America is still trying to isolate the Syrian dictator, so it can be concluded that, even in the matter of invited guests, Saudi Arabia sought a balance.

In his speech at the summit of the League of Arab States in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Volodymyr Zelenskyy, first of all, tried to explain the aggressive nature of the Russian war against Ukraine. The President emphasized that Ukraine is not trying to occupy foreign territory, and Ukrainians are defending their own home. At the same time, the Muslim diaspora of Ukraine was one of the first to suffer from Russian aggression. Volodymyr Zelenskyy directly stated that among the participating countries there are those who try to turn a blind eye to Russian aggression and emphasized that no matter how hard the Russians try to influence, there must still be independence.¹ For the Ukrainian leader, it was important to personally convey the Ukrainian position to the heads of states that did not support Ukraine and periodically announce initiatives that actually legitimize Russia's occupation of Ukrainian territories.

The position of the Persian Gulf states can have a serious impact on the Russian-Ukrainian war. These countries have the resources and capabilities to strengthen the position of the coalition in support of Ukraine and, as a result, contribute to a faster end to Russian aggression. For now, however, *countries in the region either remain neutral, like Saudi Arabia. Or, like the UAE, turns a blind eye to the Russian invasion of Ukraine and even helps the Russian Federation by protecting Russian capital and helping to circumvent sanctions.*

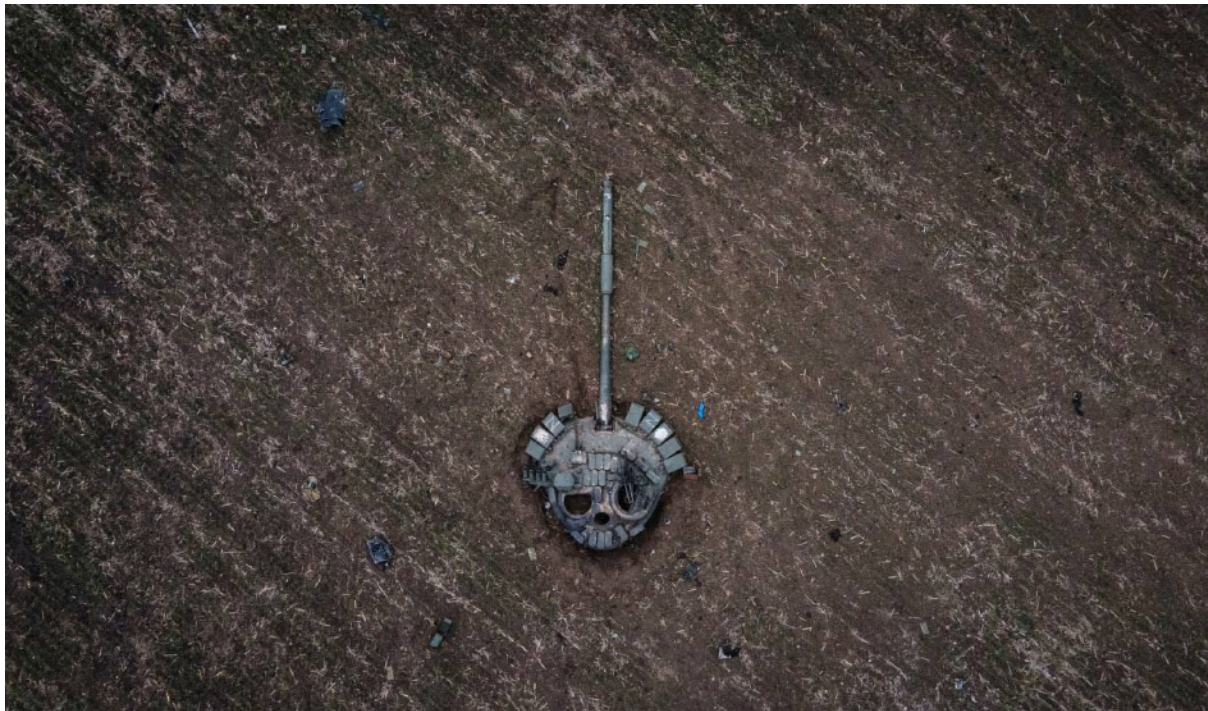
In addition to Saudi Arabia, one of the first countries of the Global South on the list of those whose support can be of significant importance for resisting Russian aggression is **India**. The country, which positions itself as the world's largest democracy, has so far used the situation in its own interests, buying cheap Russian oil, which benefits Moscow. Volodymyr Zelenskyy, as part of a working visit to Japan to participate in the summit of the Group of Seven countries, in particular, held a meeting with the Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi. The head of state thanked India for providing humanitarian aid to Ukraine, spoke about Ukraine's needs in humanitarian demining and mobile hospitals, and informed about the Ukrainian Peace Formula. According to the results of the meeting, the Office of the President of Ukraine published a rather restrained message, which may indicate *the absence of any breakthroughs in the issue of support from India.*

The country pursues a rather independent policy and, even, cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region between India and the QUAD countries evolves quite slowly. Therefore, the

¹ Закликаю сприяти захисту наших людей, включно з українською мусульманською спільнотою – виступ Володимира Зеленського на саміті Ліги арабських держав, 19.05.2023, URL: <https://www.president.gov.ua/news/zaklikayu-spriyati-zahistu-nashih-lyudej-vklyuchno-z-ukrayin-82997>

tactics of small steps, the gradual increase of cooperation in various fields, in particular, in the issue of humanitarian aid, as well as the strengthening of contacts at the high and highest levels, currently remain the optimal strategy of Indian-Ukrainian relations. If India and Saudi Arabia do not support Ukraine, it is important that they, at least, remain neutral and do not join the Russian-Chinese alliance. At the same time, it is fundamentally important that these states do not provide Russia with options to circumvent sanctions and ultimately support the restrictions introduced by the Group of Seven countries.

Ukrainian diplomacy has done extensive work in the direction of the Global South in the last month. Given the lack of attention paid to the regions of Latin America, Africa and Asia in the past, quick results from changing the position of these countries should not be expected. However, the gradual strengthening of Ukraine's ties with Africa, Asia and Latin America can bring positive results in the medium and long term. At the same time, Ukraine should use its current influence in international relations. The fact that Volodymyr Zelenskyy was invited to the summits of the Group of Seven and the League of Arab States shows that members of international community are ready to listen to Ukraine and that Ukraine can influence international processes. Currently, **the countries of the Global South do not support Ukraine and perceive the Ukrainian Peace Formula cautiously.** However, **joint work with partner countries can in the long run deter conditionally neutral countries from cooperating with the Russian Federation and, in the best case scenario, convince them to join the implementation of the Ukrainian peace plan.**



Source: Army FM

■ *Changes at the front*

Trend: *The struggle for the best tactical position to start a counter-offensive of Ukrainian troops continues*

In the Bakhmut direction, battles are taking place near Klishchiivka and Berkhivka Reservoir. The Armed Forces of Ukraine control the heights around the city and the suburbs in the south-west of Bakhmut occupied by Russian troops.

In the Avdiyivka direction, the enemy continues offensive actions in the Pervomaisky and Nevelsky districts.

In the Svatove direction, during the second half of May, fighting continued near the Masyutivka.

In the Zaporizhzhia and Vuhledar directions, the Armed Forces of Ukraine began attacking Russian positions and probing weak spots in the defense of the occupiers. The AFU has small advancement.

In the Belgorod and Bryansk directions, volunteer units from formed of Russians crossed the state border with the Russian Federation. Fighting continued in Novaya Tavilzhanka. Mutual shelling continued along the state border.

■ *Military assistance*

In the second half of May, it became known about the transfer of the following weapons to Ukraine:

FRG:

- HX81 tractors (2 units)
- seven TheMIS tracked remotely controlled infantry vehicles
- 105-mm tank ammunition
- 1 TRML-4D aerial survey radar;
- 2 Biber tank bridgelayers;
- 3 unnamed mobile protected demining systems;
- 54 reconnaissance unmanned VECTOR complexes;
- 8 anti-drone systems;
- 6 unnamed border guard vehicles;
- 1 PEP/REB station;
- 34 civilian SUVs;
- 17 8×8 HX81 tractors;
- 2 forklift trucks;
- 8 trucks/buses;
- 8 Zetros trucks.

Romania:

- M1981 howitzers

Norway:

- 8 RSZV
- 3 ARTHUR counter-battery radars

Japan:

- SUVs Type 73 II (100 units)
- 30,000 ready food rations

Iceland:

- ten gasoline trucks

The United Kingdom:

- Sea King helicopter

The USA:

- additional ammunition for the Patriot air defense system;
- Stinger anti-aircraft missiles;
- Avenger air defense system;
- missiles for HIMARS artillery systems;
- 155-mm ammunition;

- 105-mm ammunition;
- high-precision aviation ammunition;
- Zuni aviation missiles;
- AT-4 anti-tank grenade launchers;
- more than 30 million cartridges for small arms;
- means for demining;
- ammunition for overcoming obstacles;
- night vision devices;
- various equipment.

Germany plans to transfer 64 tracked all-terrain vehicles Bandvagn 206 (BV206) and 66 armored personnel carriers of an unnamed model. It became known that in the coming weeks, France will hand over dozens of armored vehicles to Ukraine, including AMX-10RC wheeled combat vehicles. Great Britain will provide Ukraine with long-range kamikaze drones and hundreds of air defense missiles. The Netherlands will allocate 260 million euros for the purchase of 155 mm artillery ammunition for Ukraine. The Government of Finland agreed to transfer a new package of military aid to Ukraine worth 109 million euros. This package of military aid included, among other things, anti-aircraft weapons and ammunition. Lithuania also announced a new package of military aid to Ukraine during the next "Ramstein". The new package of military aid from Lithuania will include anti-drone equipment, ammunition, dry food rations and other aid. Canada will transfer AIM-9 air defense missiles to Ukraine. Spain announced a new supply of M113 to Ukraine

Active work is conducted regarding the creating a coalition of aircraft and a coalition of Patriots. The fighter coalition for Ukraine currently includes eight countries: Great Britain, the Netherlands, Poland, Denmark, Sweden, Belgium, Portugal and France.

Source: Mil.ua

■ *Russia: External and internal challenges*

The Russian volunteer corps as an armed opposition to the pro-fascist Putin's regime.

For a long time, there have been discussions in the Ukrainian expert community about who Ukraine will be able to deal with after V. Putin. With the Russian invasion, no Russian opposition group was able to organize systematic resistance to the Putin regime. If the lack of resistance inside Russia can still be explained by the existence of a repressive regime that brutally suppresses protests as well as by the great support of aggression against Ukraine among the population, then the lack of active activity of the so-called Russian opposition abroad is difficult to explain. When Ukrainian citizens went to demonstrations on the streets of European cities, Russian emigrants mostly did not participate in them, or on the contrary - attacked pro-Ukrainian demonstrators, or organized their own pro-Russian rallies. A clear

example is the family of Alexei Navalny, who is trying to position himself as a democratic alternative to Putin. At the same time, the oppositionist's wife and daughter, when they are invited to ceremonial events, do not mention Ukraine and Russian aggression in their addresses. ***The problem with the Russian opposition is that most representatives of these groups do not want Russia to lose the war.*** The Russian Federation has caused immense damage to Ukraine and must be held accountable for it. The consequence of the Russian defeat will be the responsibility of all of Russia, including the so-called opposition, which links its political future with Russia. Therefore, "liberal Russia" in emigration will at some point become an opponent of Ukraine, just like the current leadership of the Russian Federation.

In conditions where there is no anti-Putin opposition, which not only holds forums, but also takes concrete steps to defeat the aggressor, Ukraine independently contributed to the formation of a real Russian opposition. In May, the paramilitary units "Russian Volunteer Corps" (RDK) and "Liberty of Russia" Legion (LSR) crossed the Russian border in the Belgorod and Bryansk regions.

With the penetration of the RDK and the LSR into the territory of the Bryansk and Belgorod regions, the war was moved to the territory of the Russian Federation. For Ukraine, this is another step towards breaking Russia's ability to continue the war. In his last year's article, the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of Ukraine Valery Zaluzhnyy wrote that the center of gravity of this war is the Russian people, and the stronger and more acute they feel the war, the sooner it will end. Currently, the frontline cities of Russia are becoming a battleground between the Russians from the RDK and the LSR on the one side and the armed forces of the Russian Federation on the other.

In the USA and countries of the EU, such a development causes not only understanding, but also ***fear***. According to The Washington Post, American partners tried to prevent Kirill Budanov from attacks on the territory of Russia. Also, in the same article, it is said that Moldova asked the US to prevent Ukraine from attacking Transnistria. Ukraine, for its part, balances between the fear of partner countries and the achievement of priority military goals. According to Volodymyr Zelenskyy, Ukraine will help the Moldovan side to resolve the Transnistria issue only in case of an official request and currently does not plan to resolve this issue by military means. ***At the same time, it is difficult to call the fears of the United States of America constructive.*** Ukraine defends itself, in accordance with its inalienable right, enshrined in Art. 51 of the UN Charter. In order to defend its independence, Ukraine has the right to strike both at the troops of the occupying army inside the state and on the territory of the Russian Federation. The United States of America fought more than one war, protecting its national security, interests and values on the territory of other countries. At that time, there was no question that the USA was an aggressor. In the same way, during the Second World War, the Allied troops, having knocked out the Nazis from their territory, went on to Berlin, and did not stop within their own borders.

In the first event, the RDK and LSR used Western weapons, in particular, American, Polish and Belgian weapons. This caused discontent among the partner countries. However, already during the second operation, Soviet equipment was recorded on video. Probably,

Ukraine found an understanding with the partner states. At the same time, after American and European equipment entered the territory of the Russian Federation, Ukraine destroyed another mythical reason for potential escalation. American armored vehicles entered the territory of the Russian Federation, and this did not lead to a nuclear strike. This led to Russia losing control over Russian settlements.

The actions of the RDK and LSR units have both a psychological and a practical effect. In this way, Ukraine is stretching Russian troops on the eve of a counteroffensive. The Russian population feels war more acutely, and soldiers and commanders are more aware of their vulnerability. This is facilitated by native Russian units, at the same time, most of the elites who call themselves the Russian opposition have nothing to do with these units and do not provide any support. A similar situation can be traced in neighboring Belarus, where the so-called liberal opposition failed to provide real support for Ukraine. **In conditions when the so-called democratic elites of neighboring countries are not capable of creating a serious opposition movement out of their “speaking clubs”, Ukraine forms real opposition.**